



# UPDATE

Dear Friends:

When I began working for the state as the Pacific Rim trade officer in 1988, I assumed it would be for three years. Little did I dream that I would be embarking on a fascinating and challenging journey that has taken me around the world on behalf of the people of Montana. I have been privileged to work at the department for over thirteen years. During that time, I have learned to admire and respect my colleagues and the work that they do on behalf of our citizens. I've been proud to be associated with them and this agency.

My work at Travel Montana has been the most rewarding experience of my life. I've been blessed with an outstanding staff whose enthusiasm and professionalism have been recognized on the national level. I've been fortunate to work hand in hand with an industry that is dedicated to not only improving Montana's economy, but also preserving and enhancing our quality of life for future generations. I've come to appreciate the legislative process and the commitment that our citizen legislators put into their efforts in trying to come to grips with the issues facing our state. I've traveled overseas with governors, visited all of our 56 counties, driven tens of thousands of miles and given hundreds of speeches to groups of all sizes and interests. I've worked with skilled contractors whose talents and efforts have positioned our state as a premier vacation destination. I've valued my association with the state and federal agencies that have been partners in our work. But most of all, I've come to respect the people of Montana...their honesty, their wisdom and their unbridled love for this land we are blessed to call our home.

It is time for me to move on to a new endeavor. Thanks to all of you for your advice, understanding and support over the years. The hardest part of leaving is saying goodbye, but I leave knowing that my life has been enriched by the experiences and opportunities afforded me.

Sincerely,

Matthew T. Cohn

*Editor's Note: The staff at Travel Montana wish Matthew the best and thank him for his foresight, sense of humor and dedication. Under his leadership, the state's tourism industry has evolved into a vital component of Montana's economy.*



## Thoughts on Current Travel Situation

The tragic events of September 11 have barely sunk in, and we are already being asked to predict what impact they will have on tourism in our state. Travel and tourism have become the world's largest industry, and already doomsayers are predicting dramatic declines in the months and years to come. It is much too early to make a rational assessment as to how all of this will affect Montana. A continuing slowdown in our economy coupled with uncertainty does not bode well. However, we need to keep in mind that most visitors (about 95%) to our state originate their travel in North America. Furthermore, the vast majority of these come to Montana by motor vehicle. Historically, when world events have created uncertainty about overseas travel, domestic destinations have benefited. In the short term, we may see some immediate impact on overseas or meeting business in the state. But overall, we don't anticipate a dramatic decline in visitation in the coming years because of the recent events. We realize that this is a difficult period for many in the industry, and we anticipate that we may need to make some changes in our marketing programs in the months ahead. However, our experience over the years has taught us that the tourism industry

in Montana is extremely resilient, and that our state will continue to be a vacation destination of choice for millions of visitors. Ultimately, our thoughts and prayers go out to those individuals and families who lost so much for reasons that we cannot comprehend.

## A Big Event

Houston, Texas may have big rockets, big hair and big oil, but come November 9-14, the Lone Star State will have BIG competition when Group and Overseas Marketing Manager Pam Gosink and Group Travel Specialist Marlee Iverson travel to Houston to tout "Big Sky Country" at the annual National Tour Association (NTA) convention. In addition, over 20 Montana tourism service suppliers will join Pam and Marlee to host tour operators at a "Montana Night" dinner/education event at Houston's Rainbow Lodge. Details of the convention will follow in the December Update.

## The Eyes Have It

The Flathead Valley and Glacier National Park were picture perfect August 23-27 when 60 amateur photographers from around the country gathered for the second annual Travel Montana/*Popular Photography* magazine's Mentor Series photo workshop. Three groups led by

professional photographers Darrell Gulin, Adams Jones and George Schaub and assisted by Montana photographers John Reddy, Chuck Haney and Karen Nichols were taught the fine art of photography in this lovely corner of the state.

Travel Montana was the major sponsor of this project with additional support from Glacier Country, the Whitefish Chamber and the city of Whitefish, Wild Eyes Photo Adventures, the Hargrave Cattle and Guest Ranch, WestCoast Kalispell Center Hotel, Photo Video Plus, Glacier National Park and Glacier Park Inc.

## Got Good News?

Do you have tourism news about your business or community that you would like to share with our readers? Send your news items to Mary Boyle, Travel Montana Publicity Coordinator, 1424 9th Avenue, Helena, Montana 59620 or e-mail: [mary@visitmt.com](mailto:mary@visitmt.com). We cannot guarantee that everything you send us will make it into this publication, but we will do our best.

*Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.*

## Calendar of Events

### October

- 9-11 Incentive Travel & Meeting Executives—Chicago
- 9-13 Hot Springs, History and Hospitality Media Tour—Gold West Country
- 11-12 Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Conference—Billings

### November

- 9-14 National Tour Association Convention—Houston

*For all of the latest Montana tourism industry information log on to Travel Montana's Intranet site: [travelmontana.state.mt.us](http://travelmontana.state.mt.us).*

## Did You Know?

- Reed Point's "Running of the Sheep" event was featured in the September issue of *Men's Journal* magazine.
- The Grizzly Discovery Center in West Yellowstone was recognized in recent issues of *Child* magazine, *Montana Magazine*, *National Geographic* and ABC's *Primetime*.
- Boulder Hot Springs won an EcoStar award from Montana State University for being an environmentally conscious business.
- The Montana Historical Society will hold its 28th Annual Montana History Conference on October 25-27, 2001 in Helena. For more details call (406) 444-4794.
- Crow Fair and the wild mustangs of the Pryor Mountains will be the focus of the ESPN 2 program "Canon Photo Safari," Saturday, November 10, 2001 at 7:30 a.m. mountain time. The program is produced by Barrett Productions in Missoula.
- The Montana Film Office launched its redesigned website. Check out the new look and feel at [www.montanafilm.com](http://www.montanafilm.com)



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